

Exploring “Flotsam” Using Google Earth

Unit Plan: Exploring “Flotsam” using Google Earth

Created by Katie Douglas

Inspired by the book “Bookmapping: Lit Trips and Beyond”, by Terence W. Cavanaugh and Jerome Burg

Time Frame: 5- 50 minute lessons

Grade Level: 4th grade

About This Book

by Scholastic

A science-minded boy goes to the beach equipped to collect and examine flotsam — anything floating that has been washed ashore. Bottles, lost toys, small objects of every description are among his usual finds.

But there's no way he could have prepared for one particular discovery: a barnacle-encrusted underwater camera, with its own secrets to share ... and to keep.

**Library Media Core Curriculum Standards:**

3c1f. f. Use technology to record and organize data/information.

5a1a. a. With guidance, organize and display findings/conclusions in a variety of formats, including the use of technology.

5a1b. With guidance, design layouts that communicate content effectively for intended audiences.

5a1c. With guidance, apply appropriate design criteria, which includes universal design principles, to the content and layout of the information product.

5a1d. With guidance, use technology to present findings/conclusions in a variety of formats.

5a2a. a. Contribute to a learning community.

5a2b. With guidance, practice digital etiquette when sharing findings and conclusions.

6a1a. With guidance, read, listen to, view, and discuss literature that reflects personal interests, provides imagined experiences, and validates individual concerns and real experiences.

6a1b. Make literature-to-self, literature to- literature, literature-to-multimedia connections, and with guidance, make literature-to-world connections.

6a1d. Use literature to answer questions or solve problems.

**Materials:**

Flotsam, by David Wiesner

Google Earth (installed on mobile lab)

Handout: List of “Useful Sites to Explore”

Wikki Sticks

Large World Map

**Cue Set:**

What does the word “flotsam” mean? Have students make predictions. Then use [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) to look up the word as a class. As a class use the definition (debris floating on the ocean and is usually from shipwrecks) and predict what the book is about.

**Teaching Strategies:**

Day 1: Exploring the Book (Using *Strategies that Work*, by Stephanie Harvey)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question Webs to Explore Thinking  🖍Create a web with the question “What is the importance or relevance of the camera in this book?” in the center. Have students respond to the question as they go through the book.  Questioning  🖍Curiosity spawns questions. Using a t-chart, have students generate questions that come to mind as they take a quick picture walk through the book.  🖍“Reread” the book much slower the second time and have the students investigate the pictures to answer their questions.  Merging Thinking with New Learning  🖍Have students use their background knowledge about the pictures along with their new learning from the book to find the pattern of events in this story.  🖍Read the story aloud and allow students to use sticky notes to write down clues and page numbers to help them. |  |

Day 2: Photograph Exploration

Divide students into groups of three and assign them a picture found in the book, *Flotsam*. Give each group the photograph and a list of helpful sites on the website. Each group will decide in which location on the earth did the picture take place (setting). Students should also write a short paragraph explaining how this picture occurred (creative writing aspect). Note: It may possibly take the beginning of Day 3 to complete this task.

Day 3: Plotting with Wikki Stix

🖍Using a large world map small groups will plot their location using star stickers.

🖍Groups will share their location and explain their decision making process to the class.

🖍 Using the book, *Flotsam* use the wikki stix to make the journey correlate from page to page.

Day 4: Exploring with Google Earth

🖍 Share with students how to use Google Earth and the benefits that it has for use in the classroom and for research.

🖍 Have students locate the area that their photograph takes place and plot it on Google Earth.

🖍 Have students create a story frame and type their paragraph that accompanies their picture.

Day 5: Final Google Earth Trip Exploration

🖍 Mrs. Douglas will have combined all plots together and paragraphs. Use the book to take a Google Earth Literature Trip through the book, *Flotsam*.

**Closure:**

🗆 Ask the students the following questions and discuss as a class.

🗆 What are the benefits of “Wordless Picture books”?

🗆 When checking them out in the library how can you use them?

🗆 What did you think of Google Earth?

**Assessment:**

Observing participation of small groups

Google Earth Plotting

Paragraph of Photograph

**Differentiated Instruction:**

Students will be placed in small groups to help students with instruction. If students are advanced in Google earth they will be given other extra assignments to explore this program. These assignments will include creating other literature trips for younger students.